



# Hands on Habitat

## State of Delaware

### What Are the Problems?

- **Native oyster populations** The majority of Delaware's historic oyster populations have been decimated by disease and overharvesting.
- **Tidal exchange** More than 10,000 acres of wetlands have been tidally restricted in the Christina River drainage area alone.
- **Invasive species** The invasive reed *Phragmites australis* dominates tidal marsh systems, displacing native species and altering wetland habitats.

### Background

Coastal areas in Delaware include thousands of acres of estuarine habitat, wetlands, rivers, and streams. These productive and diverse habitats support finfish, shellfish, and other wildlife. Growing anthropogenic pressures and influences are driving an increasing need to protect and restore these important habitats.

### What We Do

- Remove river barriers
- Remove and control invasive species
- Establish wetland buffers
- Restore underwater habitats such as submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), oyster reefs, and benthic habitat
- Reduce nutrient runoff (e.g., nitrogen and phosphorous from fertilizers)
- Bring back tidal action in coastal wetlands
- Educate communities about the value of healthy habitat and restoration

### How We Do It

NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program (CRP) achieves science-based habitat restoration through community involvement and stewardship. We build powerful partnerships among Delaware's public, private, and non-



profit organizations. Our projects continually demonstrate the benefits and effectiveness of locally based habitat conservation in Delaware.

### Our Accomplishments

Since 1996, we have:

- Awarded more than \$190,000 and leveraged more than \$200,000
- Funded 9 projects
- Completed 6 projects
- Restored 109 acres and opened 5 stream miles
- Engaged roughly 100 volunteers for almost 500 service hours through partner-led activities

### Our Partners

NOAA works with 24 public and private restoration partners in Delaware, including Restore America's Estuaries, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, FishAmerica Foundation, and Delaware's Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control.

## Our Focus

**Counteract impacts of man-made alterations in Delaware's wetlands and rivers by restoring tidal flow and removing barriers to fish migration**

### Contact

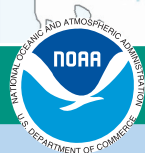
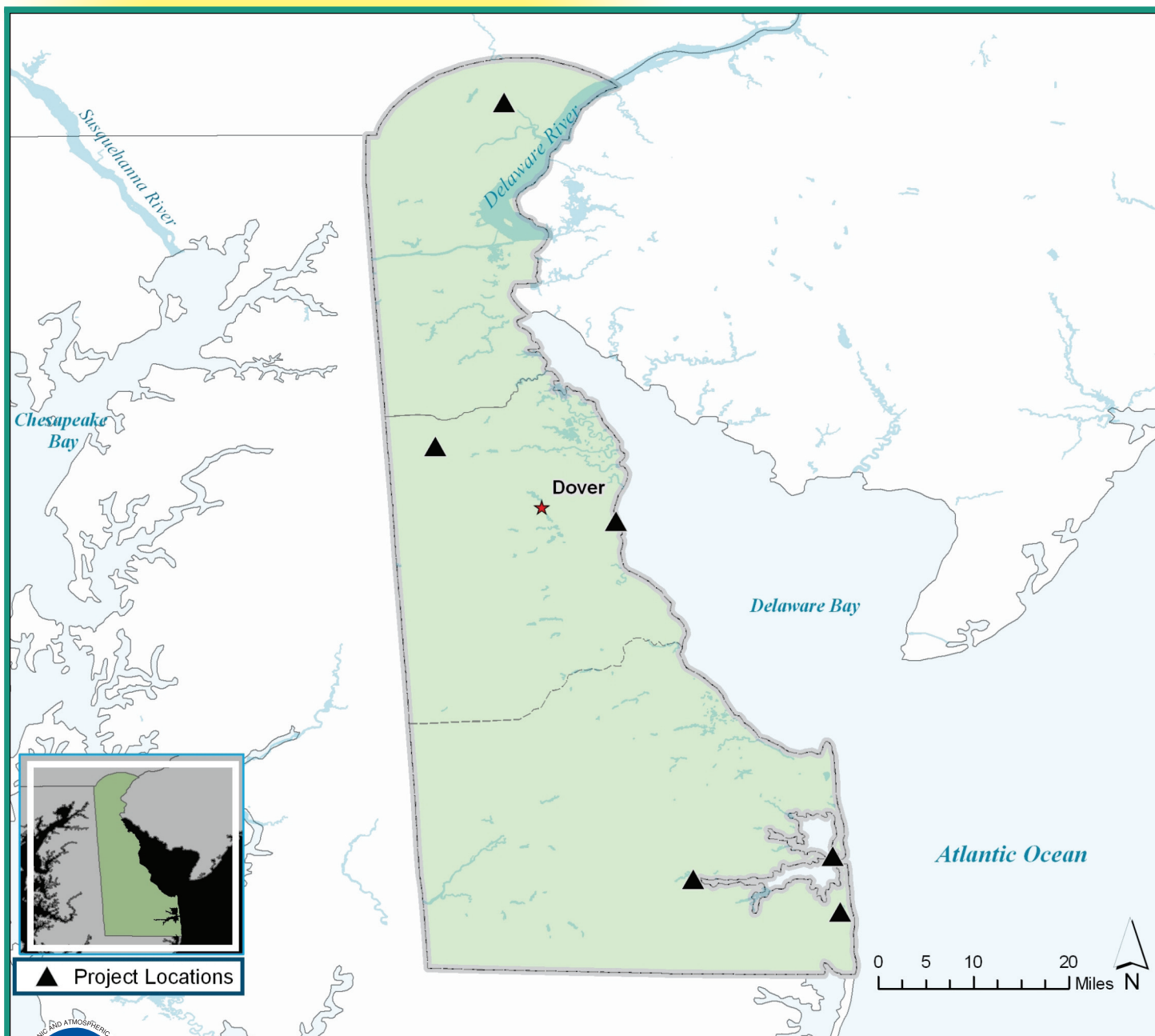
Bethany Bearmore  
NOAA Restoration Center  
74 Magruder Road  
Highlands, New Jersey 07732  
732.872.3069  
Bethany.Bearmore@noaa.gov

[www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/)

Last updated December 2007

# NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program (CRP)

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### SELECT COMMUNITY-BASED RESTORATION PROJECTS:

**American Eel Passage,  
Millsboro**

**Brandywine Shad  
Restoration, Wilmington**

**Delaware Inland Bays  
SAV Restoration,  
Rehoboth Beach**

**Delaware Inland Bays  
Shellfish Restoration,  
Ocean View**

**Horseshoe Crab  
Restoration, Pickering  
Beach**

**Pratt Farm Riparian  
Restoration, Kenton**